THE

WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

For MONDAY, March 24, 1800.

THOUGHTS *on* SYMPATHY.

To the PRINTER.

SIR;

I AM always happy when I have an opportunity of recommending any of thoſe feelings of the heart which do honour to humanity. To "weep with thoſe that weep," to lighten the burden of human woe, and to adminiſter comfort to the dejected ſoul, are offices, to the exerciſe of which we have frequent calls. I live, Mr. Printer, in a ſmall country village; and, from my ſituation in life, am ſometimes called to houſes in which poverty and affliction ſeem to have taken up their abode; yet believe me, Sir, I never return from thoſe houſes with greater pleaſure, or with more heartfelt ſatisfaction, than when I think I have contributed my ſhare in wiping away the falling tear, or whiſpering peace to the troubled breaſt. Small however as the village is, it produces two characters as oppoſite almoſt in their features, as the darkneſs of a ſtormy night is to the ſplendour of meridian day. Theſe characters allow me to introduce to your acquaintance, under the names of Auſterus and Humanus; the former a man of callous ſoul; the latter one who thinks, and feels while he thinks.

Auſterus poſſeſſes a fortune of three thouſand pounds a year, has an elegant houſe, and keeps a large retinue. His lands yield abundant crops, and his flocks are heard bleating on the neighbouring hills. His tenants are pretty numerous, his dependents many. One at firſt would be induced to

imagine that this man was deſtined by Heaven as a bleſſing to that part of the country in which he is placed; that the families around him would hail him as their liberal benefactor, and that his domeſtics would bleſs the hour in which they entered the ſpacious hall. However natural this concluſion, it would, in fact, be far from being well founded. Extremely paſſionate, he rages and ſtorms; and even after the ſtorm has ſubſided, his face beſpeaks the anger which he can ill conceal. Sour and auſtere, haughty and overbearing, he is dreaded by his ſervants, and deſpiſed by all. His tenants, whoſe lands are rented to the full, barely ſubſiſt; regret the moment they were ſo unfortunate as to tread the ground of hard oppreſſion, and even curſe him to their hearts. But what adds an indelible ſtigma to the character of Auſterus, is, that he is inacceſſible to the poor, and unfeeling to the ſons of diſtreſs. It is a painful truth, that his cane has been often lifted up over the head of poverty, as it has approached his lordly door to beg a pittance. What! Oh hardened Auſterus! were riches given thee to indulge thy pampered carcaſe, and to ſteel thy heart againſt thy poorer brethren! for let me tell thee, that ſhivering beggar there is ſtill thy brother.

Beſides the poor, the afflicted who are toſſed on the bed of ſickneſs, implore his aſſiſtance in vain. Pity is even denied them. I ventured once to recommend to him a family in the pariſh, on whom affliction's rod had long continued to lie! and I found, ere I had finiſhed my ſad narration, a tear, ſomehow or other, had forced its way down my cheek. He heard me with a ſhocking indifference, ſaid he would think of it, and turned away rudely from me, though I aſſured him (what was too true, and aggravated his ſhame) that they reſided in a corner of his own eſtate; and that their ſituation admitted of no delay. As he retired, I could perceive he was indignant at my freedom, a circumſtance which forced from me the exclamation of the Patriarch—"Curſed be his anger, for it was fierce; and his wrath, for it was cruel!" I envy not his crimſon bed of ſtate, nor his "faring ſumptuouſly every day," while he poſſeſſes a niggardly ſoul. Better, infinitely better is that man, who, though his ſhare of wealth may be more ſcanty, is bleſſed with a noble, a liberal heart! and ſuch is Humanus.

Humanus honours me with his acquaintance and his confidence. I know his heart and his feelings almoſt as well as he knows them himſelf. Deſcended from worthy anceſtors, he retains no ſmall portion of their virtues. Poſſeſſing a moderate

derate fortune, he has no idea of extravagance. What he thinks of is to do good with the little which he enjoys. His benignity is indeed wonderful. It often puts me to the bluſh, when I reflect how far I fall ſhort of it. It was but the other day, "Come," ſays he, "let us make a ſhort excurſion." I followed him. We entered a thatched cottage; I ſhall never forget the ſight, nor the part my friend acted on that occaſion.

On a low bed lay the very picture of wretchedneſs. Death ſeemed to have little more to do than to cloſe the eyes of one who appeared to ſay, "I fly to the grave as the end of my ſorrows." The feeling Humanus, whoſe very ſoul is ſympathy, with a ſoft ſtep approached the bed of the ſufferer, his eyes full of tears, his heart oppreſſed with grief; "Live," he cried, "Heaven is kind—Who can tell what happineſs is in reſerve for you? I go to ſend for the phyſician, and ſhall immediately return." Humanus haſted home to give directions to his ſervant, and came quickly back. His intentions to the afflicted mother (for ſhe was a poor widow, having four children) were now renewed; ſome wine which he had brought with him, was adminiſtered with ſucceſs; and the arrival of the Doctor, who expreſſed hopes of her recovery, changed, I could perceive, the face of my friend; the joy of his heart ſhone forth in his countenance; and never did he appear in my eyes more worthy or more amiable. "Happy Humanus," ſaid I to myſelf, "the rewards of virtue are ſure. Thou already enjoyeſt thoſe within thy own breaſt, and Heaven has ſtill greater ones in ſtore for thee—may thy laudable example become more univerſal!" He repeated frequently his viſits to the humble dwelling; nor were theſe viſits dropped till he ſaw there was leſs occaſion for them. The fact is, great fatigue of body, and ſtill greater of mind, had brought a violent fever on the forlorn widow, which the ſympathy of Humanus more than the preſcriptions of the phyſician, had tended to remove. She now lives uſeful to her children, and is often heard to pray Heaven's richeſt bleſſing on the head of her compaſſionate friend and generous benefactor. Such are the charming effects of beneficence, and ſuch the diſpoſition of Humanus.

I have finiſhed my ſtory, Mr. Printer, and upon a review of the two characters, would ſimply aſk you, "Whether would you be an Auſterus or an Humanus; a ſordid ſelfiſh being, or one who poſſeſſes a generous, a heaven-born ſoul?"

BENEVOLUS.

Curious HISTORY *of* WIGS.

THE Greeks and Romans uſed falſe hair; and had likewiſe a kind of hair-powder. Hannibal wore falſe hair. Lampridius gives a deſcription of the Emperor Commodus's wig, which was powdered with gold-duſt, and anointed with ointments of an agreeable odour, that the duſt might adhere to it. It appears not improbable, that, even then, not merely a vain affectation of pomp, but the effects of too active a gallantry (though trifling when compared with thoſe of more modern times) may have given occaſion to this invention. For farther information on this ſubject, I refer the reader to the learned commentators on the ſatirical exclamation of Cæſar's ſoldiers, during his triumphal entry into Rome: "*Urbani, ſervate uxorem, mœchum calvum adduximus!*" Henry III. King of France, loſt his hair through the then yet new-faſhioned venereal diſeaſe (although, indeed, his grandfather had already been infected with it); he had therefore one of the caps, then uſually worn, covered with falſe hair: but yet he ventured not to take off his hat in the preſence of his Queen, or of the foreign ambaſſadors, for fear they ſhould obſerve his loſs. In 1518, John Duke of Saxony, ordered his head bailiff at Cobourg, to procure for him from Nurenberg a handſome falſe head of hair; "but ſecretly (wrote he), that it may not be known that it is for us; and let it be curled, and ſo contrived that it may be put on the head without being obſerved."

But in the reign of Louis XIV. when polite manners and gallantry had become more general, men more ſenſibly affected with cold, &c. and the number of bald-heads greater; they were no longer aſhamed of the caps covered with falſe hair. This gave riſe to the idea of weaving hair into a linen cloth, and likewiſe into fringes, which were uſed for ſome time under the name Milan Points. Theſe fringes or laces were ſown in rows to the plain caps, which were now made of a thinner ſheep-ſkin; and this head-dreſs was called by the French *peruque*, by the Germans *parucke*, by the Engliſh *periwig*, contracted into *wig*.

At laſt they invented a kind of three-thread treſſes, which were ſewed to ribbons or other ſtuffs; theſe they then ſtretched out, and joined together on blocks cut into the ſhape of the head. This is the origin of our preſent wigs, the making, repairing, and dreſſing of which furniſhes employment to ſo vaſt a number of people. The firſt who wore a *peruque*, was an Abbe, named La Riviere. At one time this ornament of

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the head was ſo thick, ſo loaded with hair, and ſo long, that it hung down as low as the waiſt. A perſon who happened to have a lean viſage, was quite hid in this cloud of hair. The fore part of the wig was likewiſe worn very high: in France, this is called *devant a la Fontagne*, from the marquis of that name, who had brought it into vogue in the time of Louis XIV.

A certain *Ervais* at laſt found out the art of frizzing the wigs; by which means, with a ſmall quantity of hair they appear fuller than they could be even with a much greater. The bag-wigs firſt came into faſhion during the regency of the Duke of Orleans, and thence obtained the name of *perruques a la regence*. The Emperor Charles VI. would allow no one to be admitted into his preſence without a wig with two tails. Of a more modern date than wigs is our preſent hair-powder. In the reign of Louis XIV. it was not yet in general uſe; and that king at firſt diſliked the faſhion of wearing it. The players are ſaid to have firſt powdered their hair: but for a long time after the introduction of that practice, always combed the powder out again as ſoon as they returned from the theatre.

DESCRIPTION *of* MODERN ALEXANDRIA.

[From Sonnini's Travels in Upper and Lower Egypt.]

THE new city, or rather the town of Alexandria, is built, the greateſt part of it at leaſt, on the brink of the ſea. Its houſes, like all thoſe of the Levant, have flat terrace roofs: they have no windows, and the apertures which ſupply their place are almoſt entirely obſtructed by a wooden lattice projecting, of various form, and ſo cloſe, that the light can hardly force a paſſage. It is through this grate of iron or wood, ſometimes of elegant conſtruction, that beauty is permitted to ſee what is paſſing without, but eternally deprived of the privilege of being ſeen: it is in this ſtate of hopeleſs ſecluſion that, far from receiving the homage which nature demands to be paid to it by every being poſſeſſed of ſenſibility, it meets only contempt and outrage; it is there, in a word, that one part of the human race, abuſing the odious right of the more powerful, retains in degrading ſervitude the other part, whoſe charms alone ought to have had the power to ſoften both the ruggedneſs of the ſoil and the ferocity of their tyrants.

Narrow

Narrow and awkwardly diſpoſed ſtreets are without pave-ment as without police; no public edifice, no private build-ing arreſts the eye of the traveller, and, on the ſuppoſition that the fragments of the old city had not attracted his atten-tion, he would find no object in the preſent one that could ſupply matter for a moment's thought. Turks, Arabians, Barbareſques, Cophts, Chriſtians of Syria, and Jews, conſti-tuted a population which may be eſtimated at five thouſand, as far as an eſtimation can be made in a country where there is no regiſter kept of any thing. Commerce attracts thither beſides, from all the countries of the eaſt, ſtrangers whoſe reſidence is extremely tranſient.

You ſee them crowd on each other in the ſtreets, running, rather than walking; they likewiſe bawl, rather than ſpeak. I have frequently ſtopped, to conſider ſome perſons who had all the appearance of being agitated by violent rage: they gave to their voice all the intenſity which a broad and brawny cheſt could ſupply; their phyſiognomy wore all the traits of paſſion; their eyes ſparkled; violent geſtures ac-companied modes of expreſſion which ſeemed ſtill more vio-lent. I approached them, under the apprehenſion that they were going inſtantly to cut each others throats, and was aſto-niſhed to learn that they were only driving ſome petty bar-gain; that not a word was of a threatening complexion; that their exterior alone was in motion; that, in a word, all this vehemence was only their uſual mode of buying and ſelling.

Account of the Salmon Fiſhery at Berwick upon Tweed.

[From Fuller's Hiſtory of Berwick upon Tweed.]

THE ſalmon fiſhery conſtitutes the moſt intereſting branch of trade carried on in-Berwick.

It has been ſtated, that there are about 300 men employed in the fiſheries.

The Tweed ſalmon is of the very beſt quality. The fiſh-ing commences on the 10th of January, and continues till the 10th of October.

Some ſeaſons ſalmon are very plenty, and others very ſcarce. We have ſeen from one to 100 of them taken at a draught: but we are aſſured, that there have been many in-ſtances of from 200 to 500 taken at one hawl; and, if report is to be credited, 700 have been brought on ſhore at one draught

The capture of ſalmon in the Tweed, ſays Mr. Pennant, about the month of July is prodigious. In a good fiſhery often a boat-load, and ſometimes near two, are taken in a tide: ſome few years ago, there were above 700 fiſh taken at one hawl; but from 50 to 100 is very frequent.

The preſent rental of all the fiſhing waters together, from the mouth of the river to Norham, which is ſeven miles from Berwick, is about 10,000l. yearly, excluſive of the tithes.

All the ſalmon ſent to London from this place, were, till of late, boiled and put into kits; but that practice has, for ſome years paſt, been laid aſide. The whole of the ſalmon are now ſent in ice, which has been diſcovered to preſerve the fiſh freſh for a long time. How this came to be firſt known in Berwick was owing to the following circumſtance: Mr. Dempſter, a Member of Parliament, about twelve years ago, calling on Mr. John Richardſon of Perth, at his fiſhery, told him, it was a practice on the Continent to pack ſalmon in ice, as it had been found to preſerve them ſo freſh that they might be ſent many hundred miles without ſpoiling. This induced Mr. Richardſon to make the trial; the reſult of which not only corroborated the fact, but alſo proved to be very lucrative to Mr. Richardſon.

The ſame experiment was made here, and with ſucceſs, in the year 1788. Since that period ſeveral ice-houſes have been built on this plan; and the quantity of ice put into them yearly is aſtoniſhing. The two companies laid in 7600 cart-loads between them laſt winter; expence about 450l. for ice. There are thirty-two ſalmon coopers in Berwick.

The are four different modes of catching ſalmon uſually employed at preſent, viz. the ſweep, the ſtell, the bobb, and the hanging nets.

The ſale of ſalmon is entirely confined to the coopers; none are brought to public market. The coopers, however, are always ready to oblige any perſon with a ſalmon at the market price.

Ever ſince the introduction of ice in preſerving ſalmon, their price has greatly riſen.

For ſeveral years paſt, ſalmon has ſold from 3s. to 35s. per ſtone. They have been known to be ſold as low as 6d. or 7d. per ſtone.

Ancient Regulation relative to large Horſes.

OUR ſtatute-book contains a number of laws for promoting the breed of large horſes. An Act of Henry the Eighth

Eighth (ſince repealed) contains ſome very curious regulations on this ſubject. Every Archbiſhop and Duke is obliged under penalties to have ſeven trotting ſtone-horſes for the ſaddle, each of which, at the age of three years, was to be fourteen hands high. Similar directions follow with regard to the number of the ſame kind of horſes to be kept by perſons of other ranks and degrees; the loweſt claſs mentioned is that of a ſpiritual perſon, having benefices to the amount of 100l. per annum, or a layman whoſe wife ſhall wear any French hood, or bonnet of velvet: ſuch were obliged to have one trotting ſtone-horſe for the ſaddle. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth a bill was brought into the Houſe of Lords, but rejected on the ſecond reading, for reſtraining the ſuperfluous uſe of coaches.

THE SYLPH;
OR,
THE HISTORY OF SOPHIA MERTON.

(Continued from Page 212.)

NEW AMUSEMENTS.

A Very good company of theatrical performers about this time obtained leave to fit up a theatre in Mellford, which opened a new ſcene of gaiety for the winter. Clifford, who was now firmly fixed in all the privileges of a ſovereign butterfly, directed every thing with reſpect to the playhouſe; made parties for ſuch and ſuch evenings, &c. So great was his influence with the fair, that it called forth the obſervation of the gods, in the galleries of the theatre; and ſometimes when he was employed in handing into the houſe five or ſix of the reigning belles, his name, and ſome alluſion to his being ſo great a favourite, would iſſue from the back ſeats of the galleries; on which occaſions, he would turn his head towards his friends, the gods, with a ſprightly ſmile, and purſue his attentions to the ladies with additional ſpirits.

The amuſements of Mellford were now in their zenith, and Lucy Vernon, about this time, returned to her houſe in that town, greatly to the ſatisfaction of Sophia Merton: and the friends ſpent the day of her return in all the eagerneſs of confidential converſation. Sophia often ſaw Everard at the theatre, who ſometimes ſcarcely came to pay his compliments; but would ſtand with his back againſt the

wainſcot, (which formed a diviſion in the houſe,) obſerving all ſhe ſaid, and every thing that paſſed around her: Sometimes he appeared ſullen; at other times he affected to be eaſy and careleſs. One morning my ward accidentally met Everard at an auction; he placed himſelf near her, and entered into converſation with the familiar manner of an old acquaintance; but hiding, as much as poſſible, the air of a lover.

A few days after ſhe ſaw him at the weekly aſſembly, and he attempted to kindle jealouſy in the breaſt of Sophia, by affecting to pay particular attention to Lucy Vernon; but the real friendſhip between the two ladies, and the ſort of temper Lucy poſſeſſed, rendered this one of the moſt abſurd of all his variations, and he therefore ſoon gave it up. Strange conduct! how very ſingular, that Everard could not prevail on himſelf at once to aſcertain the ſentiments of Miſs Merton, by a preciſe declaration; or otherwiſe, that he could not ſteadily purſue one rational plan, whereby he might hope to engage her affections.

STRICTURES ON GIVING BALLS.

During the Chriſtmas holidays, the gentlemen of Mellford, inſpired by the livelineſs of ſo gay a winter, determined on giving the ladies an elegant ball; the plan and direction of which, was confided to the taſte of Mr. Clifford, who, quite in his element, entered on the preparations with the greateſt ſatisfaction. Giving a ball, or any other public entertainment, or accepting the taſk of ſelecting the company to be invited on ſuch an occaſion, is, perhaps, one of the moſt hazardous undertakings in private life. "Nay, ſtart not, my fair readers, it is no error of the printer's," the ſylph will repeat to you, "that giving a public entertainment is a very hazardous undertaking." In your invitations, you muſt ſtop ſomewhere, and wherever you ſtop, you make an enemy for life: if you leave out any perſons in the ſame rank with thoſe you invite, and who have really a right to expect an invitation, you thereby fix a mark upon thoſe perſons, and as far as lies in your power, degrade them from the ſituation they hold in ſociety; you ſeparate them publicly from their friends and acquaintance; you mark them, and depend upon it, they mark you. Whether the omiſſion proceeds from miſtake or deſign, it becomes a ſerious injury; it cauſes their becoming the topic of public converſation, and every body is gueſſing the reaſon, "Why Mr. or Mrs. Such-a-one was not aſked to the ball, &c." If they

are good people, they will not ſuffer diſlike to grow into hatred; but never can you expect the offices of good will, or kindneſs, from thoſe you have ſo injured. Wherever you ſtop in point of rank, the next gradation muſt be offended; perhaps they were juſt ſliding into the claſs, from whoſe circles you have thus endeavoured to baniſh them; and they become from that hour your concealed, but certain enemies. People often complain, that they are diſappointed in little points they wiſh to carry, particularly in matters of a public nature; and that they have ſecret enemies, who thwart their ſchemes in their ſeveral little communities, and never recollect the entertainments by which, at a great expence, they purchaſed this enmity; and of which at preſent no other conſequence remains. In ſhort, giving a ball, might be denominated, "A compendious method of making more foes in one evening, than you can make friends in the whole courſe of your life."—"What!" my fair pupils will exclaim, "muſt no one ever venture to give a ſociable dance? thoſe dances ſo pleaſant, and ſo charming!" To which the purple-winged Auri replies, "Invite a party of your friends, but not a very large party, call in a few fiddles, and dance till you are tired; but do not make it a public thing, do not call it a ball."

The ſylph hopes his readers will not conſider this digreſſion as totally uſeleſs, and will now proceed to deſcribe the Mellford gala, which formed a rare, and happy exception, to the foregoing obſervations.

THE BALL.

"Ah! happy hours how fleeting,
"Ye danc'd on down away."

SONG.

"In order to avoid as much as poſſible all riſk of offending thoſe whom it was not judged proper to invite, this ball was given to the ladies who attended the weekly aſſemblies, gave routs, &c. and by putting forth this plan, no perſon not in that line expected an invitation; and if any perſon's feelings were hurt at the omiſſion, they had only to complain, that their viſiting circle was not in that ſet, without the ſmalleſt degree of blame being attached to the gentlemen who planned the entertainment, and who were minutely ſcrupulous not to forget one perſon of that claſs.

Clifford exerted all his taſte in the arrangements; and the ladies all their's in preparations for their appearance on this occaſion.

occaſion. Sophia Merton and Lucy Vernon were, of courſe, included in the liſt of invitations. When the evening came, my intereſting ward repaired with great pleaſure to her toilet; over which the careful Auri preſided, though unſeen: Her dreſs conſiſted of a ſilk, whoſe tint was ſomething between a pink and purple, then a very faſhionable colour; her head-dreſs was a black hat, with a large plume of feathers (a favourite ornament of Sophia's,) and her ſylph, as he hovered round her, on his purple pinions, threw her hair into graceful curls, and directed the waving of the ſable plumes. At length, the hour of aſſembling arrived: there was no occaſion for making parties for a meeting, where the whole company were intended to form but one party. The ladies, therefore, accompanied each other, as chance directed, and for once in their lives, Lucy Vernon and Sophia Merton did not enter the aſſembly room together. Sophia went in the ſame carriage with a Miſs Danvers, a young friend of her's, and ſhe was handed into the ball room by Clifford, as alert, and as lively, as the gay and beautiful inſect, from whom the ſylph has borrowed his denomination. The belles conſiſted of the ladies of Mellford, and its environs, and a blaze of beauty and elegance ſhone around, which would not have diſgraced the higheſt circles. Every thing was extremely well conducted, and did great honour to the taſte of the gay Clifford. Every one appeared ſatisfied, and pleaſure beamed from every face. Sophia was much noticed, and her mind was at reſt within; which, early habituated to care, as was my ward, did not always accompany her ſmiles. Peace was in her heart, and gaiety and elegant pleaſure courted her from without. Alas! how few ſuch hours could ſhe know again! how few ever fall to the lot of mortals! The dance commenced with great ſpirit, and continued for ſome hours; after which, an elegant ſupper was ſerved up, and the dances recommencing, when a proper interval had been paſſed at the elegantly convivial board, continued till the morning was pretty far advanced. The company then returned to their reſpective homes, in the higheſt good humour, and expreſſing great ſatisfaction at the ſucceſs of a plan, which had more than anſwered the general expectation.

The behaviour of my ward, throughout ſo exhilarating an evening, had been guided by prudence and propriety; her little coquetiſh diſpoſition juſt ſhewing itſelf, but not in the leaſt approaching the confines of levity.

(To be continued.)

Further Obſervations on the Commencement of the Century.

To the PRINTER of the WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

SIR,

THE human mind cannot be altogether at eaſe, whilſt it contemplates a ſubject in which there are obſcurities; and there ſeems to be a ſort of duty impoſed on thoſe who have leiſure, and at the ſame time they will find a degree of ſatisfaction in attempting to remove them. Thoſe reſpecting the termination of the centuries of the Chriſtian æra, of which ſo much has been written on the one ſide and the other, are, for the moſt part, factitious, ſophiſtical labour, and give us another inſtance, to the many we had before, how a man may bewilder himſelf when he overlooks the proper ground upon which an argument ſhould reſt. Like an architect who would build his caſtle in the air, ſo are they who would reconcile theſe pertinacious diſputants, by a critical or fanciful interpretation of words much made uſe of in our moſt important concernments, and plain enough to all who will not torture them in ſearch "after meanings never meant."

Without duly regarding the ſources whence the truth muſt come, namely, from hiſtory and chronology, they have ſuppoſed the queſtion to depend upon the peculiar idiom of our language, and the addition and multiplication of figures; thus making a conſiderable part of Great Britain doubt, when they are in a year or out of it; how to count ten rightly; or to tell when a child, born on any firſt of January, will be ten years old; this being the day on which all now agree to admit, for want of a more accurate knowledge, that Chriſt was born.

One tells us, that the firſt year of theſe ten is the year 0; another, that the ſecond year is the firſt of them; a third, that you muſt begin with the laſt year of a preceding decade, that is, when applied to a birth, one year before the child was born; and ſo when you have added nine, or ninety-nine to it, that ten or one hundred years have elapſed, ſince its birth. What a cloud has ill-governed critical pride here raiſed around ſuch plain propoſitions, the very ſimplicity of which has increaſed the indignant rage of plain men, not willing to ſubmit to ſuch humiliating impoſitions! The Poet Laureat, who is quoted in your Entertainer of the 27th ult. in his official capacity, would have done well enough, had he ſtuck to his authorities, to which I have no objection, except

cept that Dionyſius Exiguus was the author of the table, which he frames thus :

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |

But when he quits his proper ground, and attempts to ſhew how theſe differences in opinion have ariſen, he ſoars, with his companions, into the clouds of error, and ſeems to have been as little ſucceſsful with his *atoms of time*, as Epicurus and his followers were with thoſe, with which, as they would have it, every thing was formed. The Laureat's table, however, being attended to, would prove the reverſe of what he would eſtabliſh by it, viz. that the 18th century will not end before the expiration of this year. His table contains ten years ending with the number 10, all being neceſſary to complete the firſt decade ; then multiply 10 by 10, and you have 100, the firſt century ; and 100 by 18, and you have 1800 : and in as much as the laſt year of the firſt 10 was neceſſary to complete the firſt decade, ſo is 1800, the laſt year of the laſt decade, neceſſary to complete the 18th century ; conſequently it cannot end before the expiration of this year.

But the Laureat's atoms numbered 1 and 1800, or 1 and 10 (alike for example), mark, as he ſays, the terminations of thoſe years reſpectively, yet that the years thus marked and numbered, and ending with thoſe marks, are not the 1ſt, and 10th, or 1800th years. Look at his table, and ſay, whether the ſpace from 0 to 1 can be any thing but the 1ſt year ? and the ſpace from 9 to 10 any other than the 10th year ? and whether it be not, with due deference to the Laureat, palpable nonſenſe to ſay the contrary ? Is it leſs ſo to ſay, that the ſpace from 0 to 1 is the year 0, and that the ſpace between the number 9 and 10 in the table is the year 9 ? which is his doctrine, but not only contrary to the commonly received idiom of the Engliſh language, but to the conſtruction of every record in the country, where it is noticed, reſpecting our moſt important concerns ; wherein the firſt year, or the year 1, and the tenth year, or the year 10, mean one and the ſame year, bearing no other tranſlation into Latin than the words *anno primo* and *anno decimo ;* and in like manner we ſay, with reſpect to the preſent year, *anno Domini, milleſimo octingenteſimo ;* or, *in* the year of our Lord, 1800.

" A man who ſays he is 30, does not mean that he is in his 30th year :" True, were he to ſpeak vaguely, he *might* ſay, with the poet, he was 30 years old, that is, if he had not much exceeded that point ; more accurately, he would ſay

he

he was in his 31ſt year, and how far advanced in it; but if he were nearly 31 years old, and were to tell you he was in his year 30, meaning his 31ſt year, he would neither be accurate nor underſtood. Decades, or centuries beginning at the ſame time, neceſſarily form a like ſeries of years, whether computed by cardinal or ordinal numbers. It is not denied that the 18th century, according to Dionyſius Exiguus, who, being the author of the Chriſtian æra, ought to govern therein, expired with the laſt year: but theſe gentlemen do not go the right way to ſatisfy their opponents, *by proving it*, although they may be right, as I might be in aſſerting that the Archbiſhop of Canterbury is at this moment on his knees at prayer, in his palace at Lambeth, who am near three hundred miles from that place.

Chronologers and hiſtorians to whom we muſt refer, to ſolve the queſtion, inſtead of agreeing about the day on which our Saviour was born, differ in no leſs than ſix or eight years, in fixing the time of this event. In the Tabula Chronologicâ, at the end of Ainſworth's Dictionary, you may find the name of Dionyſius Exiguus, who was born, A. D. 519. The Chriſtian æra having been introduced by him, all the enlightened nations, adopting one æra or another, moſtly from events peculiar to themſelves, he might, as properly at that time, have counted the years, from this epoch, by cardinal, as ordinal numbers. Before the introduction of this æra, the Jews, as well as Chriſtians, reckoned time chiefly from the creation; an event ſtill more uncertain in its commencement. According to the vulgar opinion, and by the Julian period, the nativity happened in December, in the year of the world, 4713, which prevailed probably from a miſtake of Dionyſius' Commentators, or becauſe he himſelf had not ſufficiently publiſhed the ſcheme of his epoch; and the next year, 4714, was counted the firſt year of Chriſt; add to 4713, the years that will have elapſed on the 31ſt of December next, viz. 1800, and you will have 6513, the preſent year of the world, according to the Julian period, and agreeably to our common way of reckoning at this day; by which the 18th century will not end, until the expiration of this year. But it ſeems that Dionyſius, in truth, fixed his cycle from the Incarnation, adhering to the Julian period, from whence the Popes ever dated their bulls, in the year of the world, 4712, and his epocha, from the 1ſt of January, 4713, making the latter the firſt year, inſtead of 4714, which, in that caſe, became the ſecond, and conſequently, the centuries calculated from the

one of theſe periods of commencement, muſt end a year ſooner, than from the other, and that which was ſaid to be in the year 1751, when the ſtyle was altered by an act of our Parliament, to make it correſpond with the Gregorian, according to the vulgar reckoning, was, according to Dionyſius, in the year 1752, and the laſt year 1799, ſhould, by the ſame rule, be 1800, from the nativity; and which mode of computing, our legiſlators in the act alluded to, the authors of the tables in our common prayer-books, and many other authors, have adopted.

I flatter myſelf the difference in opinion that has ariſen upon this ſubject, is here plainly accounted for; and that there will be no occaſion in future, for any other queſtion concerning it, than whether you mean to compute in the common way of ſpeaking, or according to Dionyſius. You ſee, that the ridiculous year *nothing*, is caſt out, as it ſhould be; for in computing from the creation, the year of the incarnation and birth being the ſame, is included in the time before Chriſt, to which the years ſince elapſed are added, and this takes in the whole time from the creation; whereas had the year 0 intervened, one year would have been loſt.

Should others, your readers, who have opportunity and leiſure, or the Poet laureate in his official capacity, deſire to examine more particularly into the ſubjects before mentioned, let them refer to Barrow's Dictionary on the Arts and Sciences, Beda, Petavius, Cardinal Barronius, Scaliger, Kepler, Helvicus Behemius, Salmeron, Calveſius, Voſſius, Genebrand, &c. &c.

I am, &c.

February 28th, 1800. Q.

☞ *We muſt beg leave to decline inſerting any thing farther on this ſubject, as the limits of the Entertainer will not allow of a further diſcuſſion.*

Compariſon between the Harbours of Plymouth and Portſmouth.

To the PRINTER of the WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

SIR,

WITH all deference to the obſervations of the Rev. Mr. Gilpin on the ſcenery of the Tamar, &c. I beg leave to drop a few thoughts on the remark that, "the Hamoaze

Hamoaze is eſteemed, after Portſmouth, the beſt ſtation for ſhips of war on the Britiſh coaſt."*

The Hamoaze is by far ſuperior to Portſmouth as an harbour, will contain a greater number of ſhipping, and which are moored to greater advantage than at Portſmouth, where they are obliged to moor the ſhips head and ſtern in ſmall creeks and inlets, there not being ſufficient room to ſwing. Every ſhip, from a corvette or ſloop of war to a firſt rate, ſwings with the tide in Hamoaze.

Portſmouth is, however, far ſuperior to Plymouth with regard to its roadſted; the Iſle of Wight at the former effectually ſheltering our fleets of men of war and merchant ſhips. Numerous convoys have, indeed, lain at Plymouth in caſes of emergency, but Portſmouth will ever be the grand rendezvous for ſhipping of all kinds, as the Sound of Plymouth is by no means adapted to ſhelter, and has likewiſe ſuch a tremendous chain of breakers ſurrounding it, that ſhipwreck is almoſt uniformly attended with fatal conſequences. Portſmouth, therefore, poſſeſſes the beſt roadſted, but Plymouth by far the beſt harbour.

The Dock-yard at Plymouth is now, too, ſuppoſed to be the firſt in the world. It ſtands on nearly the ſame ground as that of Portſmouth, but is by far the beſt adapted for buſineſs, and more reſpectable in its public edifices. Cleanlineſs is a prominent feature too, in Plymouth Yard, which we cannot find in that of Portſmouth, where the infinitude of buſineſs, occaſioned by the vaſt reſort of ſhipping lying in the roads, prevents all attention to that domeſtic regularity, which ſo diſtinguiſhes Plymouth Yard.

I ſubmit theſe remarks to your inſpection, and the peruſal of your numerous readers, and remain,

Your's reſpectfully,

N. T. CARRINGTON.

Plymouth Dock, March 3.

* Vide page 177.

A REFLECTION.

WHAT addreſs or prepoſſeſſion ſpeaks, knowledge ſecures. Lord Bacon has declared, "that a pleaſing figure is a perpetual letter of recommendation"—many are content to ſee, not to weigh objects!

Deſcription of a Vegetable Tinder, uſually called BOLETUS IGNIARIUS.

HORIZONTAL: Ligneous: almoſt circular: with zones brown or grey near the rim above; beneath plain, yellowiſh, porous. It is the ſtiptic agaric in general uſe ſome time ago, commonly uſed by the German poſtillions to light their pipes.—*Schoef.* 137. *Lightfoot.*

On SOBRIETY.

[From the Rev. Mr. Jones's Life of the late Biſhop Horne.]

THE reſidence of wiſdom is ſaid, by one of the antients, to be in dry regions, not in bogs and fens. If the temperature of climate and ſoil have a great effect upon the mind, that of the body muſt needs have a far greater; and he who, by drenching himſelf continually with liquor, puts his body into the ſtate of Holland, may expect to have the genius of a Dutchman for his pains!

Inſcription to be ſeen on the Walls of the Bridewell at Rocheſter.

RICHARD WATTS, Eſq.
By his Will, dated Auguſt 23, 1579,
Founded this Charity,
For Six poor Travellers, who, not being
Rogues or Lawyers,
May receive, *Gratis*, for one Night,
Lodging, Entertainment, and Four-pence each—
In Teſtimony of his Munificence,
In Honour to his Memory,
And Inducement to his Example,
NATHANIEL WOOD, Eſq. the preſent Mayor,
Has raiſed this Stone,
Gratefully to be Renewed, and Inſcribed,
A. D. 1771.

The Mayor and Citizens of this City, and Dean and
Chapter, Church-Wardens, and Commonalty
Of the New Bridge, are
To ſee this executed for ever.

Anſwer, by W. Brock, of Evercreech, to T. Bullock's Charade, inſerted December 30.

A RAM and ROD together join'd
Are in your charade well combin'd.

☞ We have received the like anſwer from T. Whicker, R. Thomas, W. Hobbs, and W. Harris, of Exeter; J. R. Toulmin; and R. Maſſett, of Saltaſh.

A QUESTION, *by A. Corſe, of the Royal Artillery, Plymouth Dock.*

A Ladder 25 feet long will reach from the top of a wall, ſtanding cloſe by the ſide of a ditch, to the oppoſite ſide of it, but ſliding back the foot of the ladder 8 feet from the outſide of the ditch, it will only reach 5-6ths of the height of the wall. Query, the height of the wall, and the breadth of the ditch?

A CHARADE.

MY firſt the ſilent, mournful tear is ever known to ſhew,
My ſecond's oft the cruel cauſe from whence that tear doth flow;
For if my third my ſecond had not held by far too dear,
My firſt had never forc'd the melancholy tear.

A CHARADE, *by G. Coulman, of Broadhempſton.*

MY firſt's the hue of Nancy's eyes,
That charming fair of mine,
Together with her roſy cheeks
Which beauteouſly do ſhine.

My ſecond oft doth veil the head
Of all the female race;
And with my lovely nymph 'tis found
With decency and grace.

My whole when found, ye ſapient train,
And plac'd in order true,
A bird you quickly will explain,
And ſo, kind gents. adieu.

POETRY.

ADDRESS *to a* SNOWDROP.

WELCOME ſweet harbinger of op'ning ſpring,
Thy penſive beauties caught my wandering eye;
I've pluck'd thee, ſolitary flower to bring,
Thy tender frame, where no rude blaſts are nigh.

I ſee, thou ſcarce canſt rear thy drooping head,
For froſt's inclement pierce thy lovely form,
But I'll tranſplant thee to a warmer bed;
My hand ſhall raiſe thee, and my fire ſhall warm.

Oh would ſome ſympathiſing gentle hand,
Thus raiſe the human flower, when miſery's dart,
And keen affliction, with her ſcorpion wand,
Would make a victim of the youthful heart.

How would my heart rejoice, could I relieve,
And wipe away the tear from ſorrow's eye,
The child of ſuffering, could ſweet comfort give,
Or change into a ſmile the widow's ſigh.

Alas! the conſolation I would grant
To others, I myſelf muſt never know;
But if the means, the power to bleſs, I want,
I can commiſerate, tho' not beſtow.

LINES *on* SPRING.

CALM'D is the roaring of the billowy main;
The orient beams, the ſtormy clouds are fled;
Zephyrus woos the blue-ey'd naiads again,
The growling north-eaſt ſeeks his cavy bed.

Freed by the potent ſun's enliv'ning ray,
Fair nature pleas'd, with animation ſmiles;
Each ſcene to decorate with flow'rets gay,
With taſteful hand laboriouſly ſhe toils.

Lo! at his magic touch, the primroſe blows,
The purple violets grateful odours ſhed;
Amid the humid marſh the cowſlip glows,
And modeſt daiſies ornament the mead.

The garden now its flow'ry pride diſplays,
In robe imperial ſhines the crocus fair;
A ſpotleſs ſtole the ſnow-drop fair arrays,
The beauteous hyacinth perfumes the air.

And

And, gay, in vernal charms, the ſhrubb'ry's ſeen,
What various hues and bloſſoms charm the eye!
The hawthorn blooms, the copſe is clad with green,
The ſhadowy grove reſounds with harmony.

Their matin hymns the larks now ſing with glee,
If day's bright regent does the ſky illume;
And ſweet the murmur of the buſy bee,
That ſucks the honey from the orchard's bloom.

High on the breezy downs, and on the plains,
Innumerous lambkins ſport, and bleat their joy;
Wildly melodious pipe the ſhepherd ſwains,
And ſpring's gay jubilee meets no alloy.

Wav'd by the gale there embryo harveſts grow,
And ev'ry verdant blade is burniſh'd high;
The glitt'ring rivers murmur as they flow,
Serene and cloudleſs is the azure ſky.

The ſilent ſhade reflection now may ſeek,
And muſe on actions paſt with pure delight;
As memory pictures deeds of childhood meek,
Or manhood's firmneſs in the paths of right.

And mad ambition, whoſe ferocious breaſt
Throbb'd with wild joy, when conqueſt crown'd his arms,
Amidſt theſe tranquil ſcenes may love to reſt,
And be enamour'd of fair virtue's charms.

Here modeſt beauty, from licentious gaze,
Unveil'd may wander peaceful thro' the grove:
And age rever'd may ſpend his fragile days,
Bleſt with the ſmiles of happineſs and love.

ADDRESS *to* HEALTH.

'TIS not, becauſe thy hand can throw
O'er nature's cheek the matchleſs glow;
'Tis not, becauſe thy crimſon dye
Adds luſtre to the ſparkling eye;
Ah, not for theſe, I bow the knee,
And hail the wiſh'd approach of thee:
How light ſuch views, compar'd to mine,
Which bring me, ſuppliant, to thy ſhrine!
'Tis thine, a parent's tear to dry,
And bid affection's terrors fly;
'Tis thine, to draw from friendſhip's breaſt,
The painful care, forbidding reſt;
The watchful look, the anxious fear;
The ſtifled ſigh, th' averted tear—
'Tis thine to baniſh, and convey
To ſorrow's breaſt, hope's chearing ray:
'Tis thine, to aid each tender care
My grateful heart muſt ever ſhare:
Oh then—how dear thy ſmile to me,
Since more than life, depends on thee!